



**CITY OF PAWTUCKET**  
**FIRE DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS**  
155 ROOSEVELT AVENUE  
PAWTUCKET, RHODE ISLAND 02860

**OFFICE OF THE FIRE CHIEF**

**JAMES E. DOYLE**

**MAYOR**  
May 25, 2004

**TIMOTHY P. McLAUGHLIN**  
**FIRE CHIEF**

Secretary Marlene H. Dortch  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: WT 02-55 Improving Public Safety Communications in the 800 MHz Band**

Dear Secretary Dortch,

In my career as a firefighter, I've learned that clear and reliable communication is just as important as hoses, ladders and axes to effectively fight fires. That's why it disturbed me to learn that police, fire and emergency services personnel across the country struggle each day to communicate because of interference in the 800 MHz band.

In a time when nearly everyone on the street has a cell phone to their ear, it is reprehensible that we still cannot guarantee that first responders can reach each other when it is most essential. I was encouraged though, when I heard that public safety officials had joined with private companies like Nextel to present the Consensus Plan to the FCC.

But now, the tune of the proceeding has changed. From what I've read in the media lately, vocal commercial wireless companies have slowed down the decision process and those on the front lines are going to have to wait for a resolution to the dangerous interference problem as the FCC reviews new, last-minute, unrealistic proposals. This is an issue about safety, it is not about corporations or politics or money. I understand that businesses have to look out for their bottom lines. But, that is not what the FCC should be concerned with in this matter. The Commission has a solution and that solution should be approved. Delay tactics from industry competitors should not get in the way of doing right by public safety.





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I urge you to put an end to this roller-coaster ride. Please approve the Consensus Plan and allow us to do our jobs safely and effectively with seamless communications.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Chief Timothy P. McLaughlin  
Pawtucket Fire Department

